

## **Historic, Archive Document**

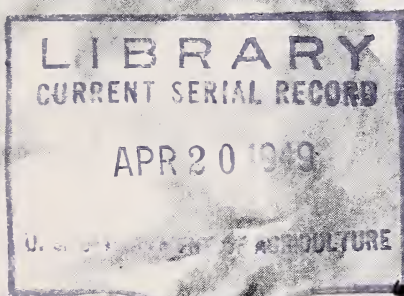
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# You

## AND FOREST FIRES





**SOMEHOW  
SOMEWHERE  
SOMEBODY**  
was CARELESS, and





# FIRE!

## so what?

### **YOU live in an apartment.**

Whoever you are, wherever you live, forest fires DO affect YOU!

Let's say your apartment is in Brooklyn. Leisurely, you turn on your radio, and hear an announcer say:

"Portland, Oreg. Today the Tillamook burn is raging like a hurricane. Flames are roaring up the mountainsides and starting new forest fires. Three thousand fire fighters face entrapment. Patrols are holding the center of a fiery front 15 miles wide. Two soldiers and one civilian were killed today. What caused this latest disaster is not yet known, but it is believed that carelessness on the part of . . ."

"So what?" you say, and turn the dial to another program. "That fire is 3,000 miles away. What does a forest fire in Oregon have to do with me in Brooklyn?"

The answer is, PLENTY! Let's look inside your apartment. It's your home, and you're mighty proud of it. You've spent a lot to make it attractive and livable. And what's helped to make it so? WOOD, in all its forms. WOOD from the very forests, perhaps, that are blazing in Oregon.

Some of your furniture is solid wood, handsomely designed and finished. Some is veneer, beautifully grained and matched. That piano is a master-



piece of wood throughout. The smooth-flowing lines of the curving rim were achieved by bending and gluing together as many as 16 thin layers of wood. The sounding board, hammers, and many other parts are of fine woods, assembled with infinite care to give you an instrument of distinction.

Other things in your home — radios, blankets, lampshades, napkins, pencils, rugs, and textiles — may have had their beginnings in our forests. Your rayon fabric, photographic film, and artificial sponges are made from cellulose acetate, which had its origin in wood.

"So what?" you say. "That's interesting but how does that fire in Oregon hit me?"

The effect of that fire on YOU in Brooklyn is indirect. Your loved ones will not be burned nor your home destroyed in those flames. But nevertheless, YOU will pay, in shortages and soaring prices. When it comes to replacing anything built of wood in that apartment, YOU will pay and pay and pay!

When the woods burn, sawmills and factories often close down and pay checks stop for many workers who may have been customers for a product of YOUR business. Prices on wood products which had their origin in the fire area will increase, and YOU, the consumer, will help bear the burden.

"So what?" you say. "MY business didn't suffer." But it may. You or your boss may have a valuable client who was burned out in that disaster. Your business may depend to a vast extent upon the success or failure of that client in Oregon.

Perhaps you wish to make a long-distance call, but the lines are down, and the poles destroyed by fire. Delay ensues, and delay costs YOU money.

A shipment you need from the Far West may not reach you until the delay has caused annoyance, worry, and expense, because rail transportation was disrupted by fire. Yes, YOU in Brooklyn pay, when fire gets out of hand in Oregon.

## **YOU are a farmer in Kansas.**

You're young, a war veteran. Out there on the prairie in the western part of the State, there's hardly a tree between you and the Rockies to break the wind that blows.

Your military experience taught you the value of wood in wartime. You saw cantonments, defense plants, shipyards, barges, aircraft, and hangars built of wood. Ammunition was shipped in wooden boxes, and machinery of all kinds required wooden crates.

Now, in peacetime, YOU want a house and barns on your own lands. Maybe you're doubled up with your in-laws, waiting for a chance to build. You have the land and the money—but you lack the materials.

After the chores are done, you glance at your paper. A bold headline catches your eye: "Maine Forest Fire Destroying Town." You read on:



“Kennebunkport, Maine. A wind-swept forest fire roared into this community of 2,000 tonight. In addition to destroying thousands of dollars worth of timberland, the blaze has already razed one-fourth of the town. Two hotels, a school, and 200 homes have been wiped out. Selectmen are appealing by radio for help before the whole town is destroyed. The gigantic blaze started ———”

“So what?” you say, tossing the paper aside. “What’s that got to do with ME out here in Kansas?”

Again the answer is, PLENTY! When you were reading that headline, the forest fire in far-away Maine was burning enough timber to supply you and thousands of others like you with beams, joists, and weatherboarding for houses, barns, and sheds. That fire in Maine and others starting every day throughout the country, consume the wood that might have supplied you on the farm with a hundred things you want and need. Lumber needed to rebuild the homes destroyed in Maine might otherwise have been available for use in Kansas.

When you build that place of yours, you’ll need paint and varnish to beautify and protect the wood. And paints, varnishes, and turpentine thinners are based on ingredients extracted from the forest. These particular products don’t happen to come from the Maine woods, but they DO come from our southern forest which may also be burning right now.

Yes, YOU in Kansas need our forest products. Even the newspaper bringing you news of the fire in Maine is made from wood pulp, tons of which are used every day. The mail-order catalogs you get, the magazines you subscribe to, the books you read, and the letters you get — all these were once part of the forests.

Whether the woods burn in Maine or in some other part of our country, YOU suffer in Kansas. You wait longer for what you need, and you pay more when you get it!

## **YOU live in Seattle.**

YOU work for a large far-western railroad. One night, you see a news-reel of a great forest fire in California. On the screen, you see women and children being evacuated from the fire zones while their homes and their possessions are consumed by the on-rushing flames. As the smoke rolls and



the flames lick out, you hear the voice of the narrator above the crackling fire:

"This was once part of a beautiful forest. One hundred fifty volunteers working in this canyon fought fire until flames forced them to flee for their lives. The immediate threat to nearby communities was checked, but not before 60 homes had been destroyed. Bulldozer crews, backfiring flame-throwers, and hundreds of men battled this blaze. Despite all efforts, many thousand acres are still burning. Property damage runs into the millions. One man died of a heart attack after fighting flames that threatened his home, and five volunteer fire fighters . . . ."

Those scenes stay with you as you head for the nearest exit. Outside, you breathe the clean night air. "Well, so what?" you say. "What does that fire in California have to do with ME?"

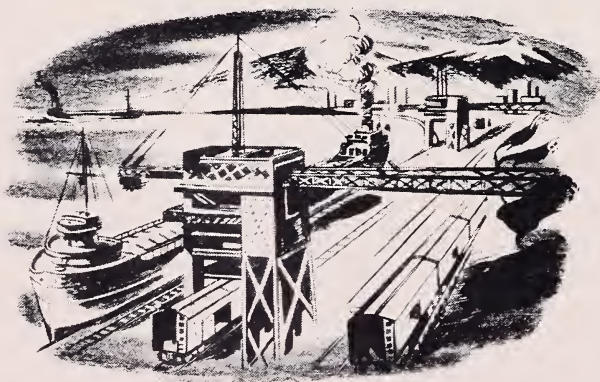
Once again the answer is, PLENTY! This time it's a lot closer to home. After all, Seattle is not too far from California, and YOU work for the railroad, remember? It's a great industry whose influence and network extends over a widespread empire.

This railroad upon which you depend for a living uses huge quantities of wood. The construction, maintenance, and repair of tracks call for millions of wooden cross ties; in fact there are over a billion ties in use today throughout the United States.

Thousands of wooden telegraph poles line the right-of-way and support a vast communications network. Railroad buildings, bridges, and snow fences are largely built of wood. Metal boxcars are usually lined with wood. Wooden floors absorb shock and resist corrosion. Even refrigerator cars need wood for insulation.

"So what?" you say: "What does this have to do with a forest fire in California?"

Again the effect is largely economic. American railroads depend to a considerable degree upon the revenue obtained from the transportation of forest products. Recently, in 1 year, the railroads hauled over 100,000,000 tons of wood and wood products. This does not include the tonnage of paper, paper products, furniture, packing and crating materials. Altogether, at least 10 percent of all tonnage hauled by the railroads comes from our forests.







The railroad for which you work in Seattle, with its feeder lines fanning out toward the south is vitally interested in the steady movement of products from and through the fire area. These products help provide the revenue that keeps the railroad — your railroad — running. Any interruption in the smooth flow of traffic may create a bottleneck which could result in costly delays.

## **YOU live in the deep South.**

By newspaper, radio, and newsreel you learn of these spectacular fires in Oregon, Maine, and California. They rate headlines in the press, flash announcements over the national radio networks, and reels of motion-picture film. Meanwhile, do you know what is happening in your own southland? Thousands of small uncontrolled ground fires are burning over many acres of woodland every day without attracting much attention. Small fires, yes, but they destroy countless little trees — tomorrow's timber. Most of them are started through carelessness and indifference. Often this damage and destruction fails to rate even a mention in the county newspaper. And yet YOU cannot afford to be indifferent. Stop these fires, and timber production in the South will be doubled.

Your southern woodlands encompass a vast area. Here grow the pines — longleaf, shortleaf, loblolly and slash — the economic backbone of the South. From the longleaf and slash pine comes the gum from which turpentine and rosin are manufactured by southern labor. From these forests comes the wood pulp used in the making of newsprint, cartons, boxes, and that tough brown wrapping paper known as kraft. This timber is cut, processed, and marketed by southern labor. The profits derived from this important industry go into southern pocketbooks — YOURS.

Your business may have nothing to do with lumbering, pulp making, and the refining of turpentine and rosin, but YOUR business and your livelihood are influenced by those who depend on these industries for jobs.

When fire despoils your southern woodlands, the basic raw material is burned and production of finished products may be slowed down. The security of those who cut, process, sell, or transport products made from wood is endangered. Each stoppage and set-back hits someone's pocket-book, and since YOU live in the South, it directly hits YOURS.

# CAUSE

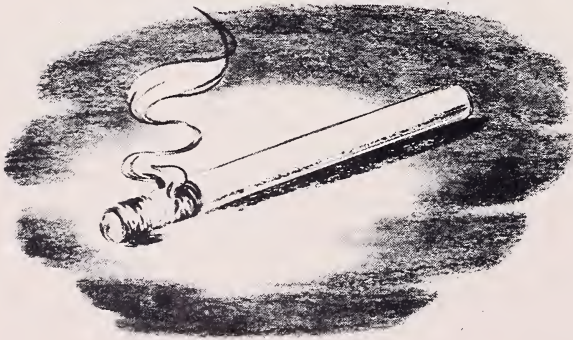


YOU, or someone like you, cause 90 percent of all forest fires! Yes, YOU, the camper, hunter, fisherman, or tourist. YOU, the farmer, traveling salesman, logger, rancher, cattleman, or railroad man. YOU, who live in or close by our forests and woodlands, who work in them or close to them, who tramp or drive through them. YOU set fire to the forests, through sheer carelessness or ignorance.

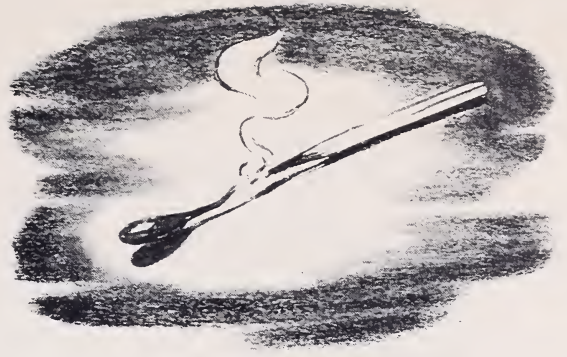
YOU, the camper, in haste to hit the trail, leave your campfire without making sure it is DEAD OUT. It looks dead, but sometime later a breeze springs up and fans a feeble spark to life. The breeze increases. The sparks multiply. Charred chips of glowing bark are blown into dead leaves and needles nearby. They smolder, and the fire creeps for a time along the forest floor, burning the smaller trees and rotten branches. Soon the floor of the forest is a sheet of flame. This is a surface fire.

If the wind rises sharply, this surface fire might spring upward through the dry branches of smaller trees into the tops of the forest giants, starting a crown fire, the kind that wipes out great stands of tall timber.

YOU, the tourist, returning with your family after a grand tour of our parks and forests, are speeding along a highway that cuts through the heart







of the forest. Instead of stubbing out your cigar or cigarette in the ashtray on the dashboard, you unthinkingly toss it out of the car window. The wind whips it into a dry patch of weeds. The weeds ignite, and the flames travel into low brush and small trees, burning rapidly. Soon it has reached the forest, and YOU have unwittingly started a conflagration.

And so it goes. ANY spark is dangerous in the woods — whether from a cigarette, campfire, logging equipment, or even a passing train.

Yes, throughout the Nation, 9 out of 10 forest fires are man-caused. Of these, 6 of the 9 are due to carelessness and ignorance, and 3 are deliberately set. Sometimes they are set by arsonists for malicious reasons, such as getting even with a neighbor. Often they are deliberately started under some misguided idea that they will kill or drive away snakes, spiders, chiggers, or boll weevils.

Incendiarism is responsible for many a fire. Let's say you are a cattleman in the Southern States. You think it is necessary to "green up" the woods in the winter and spring to improve grazing. Perhaps you are careful to burn only on your own land. On the other hand, you may not be a landowner, but still consider it your privilege to start grazing fires that burn up other folks' trees and seedlings, and possibly their houses, barns, and fences. This deliberate and often malicious disregard for the rights and property of others is the direct cause of many serious fires throughout the South. In the public interest, citizens should demand that strict law enforcement be brought to bear on those who cause such fires.

Only 10 percent of our forest fires are due to natural causes such as lightning and spontaneous combustion. The rest are started by YOU and YOU and YOU. Yes, the three main causes of fires are men, women, and children.



# EFFECT



Almost one-third of this land of yours is forest land — 630,000,000 acres. And every year in the United States over 200,000 fires burn and scar about 30,000,000 acres. Think of it! More than a twentieth of our woodland is burned and damaged EVERY year.

Each year enough saw-timber trees are destroyed to supply the building needs of a city of over a quarter of a million people. The saw timber that goes up in flames is enough to build 86,000 five-room homes. Forest fires destroy enough pulp-size trees each year to produce  $3\frac{1}{4}$  million tons of newsprint, enough to supply every newspaper in the United States for 12 months.

The effects of forest fires are many. But directly or indirectly they affect YOU.

## **Fires can cause floods.**

Here's an example. In Los Angeles County, Calif., on New Year's Day, 1934, a flood ripped out of Pickens Canyon, destroyed 400 homes in the town of Montrose, caused \$5,000,000 damage, and took 34 lives. About a month earlier, a forest and brush fire had burned over the watershed area above the canyon, destroying the cover of grass, leaves, and other plant litter which helps absorb falling water. Heavy rains occurred over the whole mountain area, but it was from the few hundred acres above Pickens Canyon and only from that burned-over watershed, that damaging flood waters came.

## **Fires destroy grazing lands.**

On the morning of April 10, 1948, near Holyoke, Colo., a farmer decided to burn the rubbish in a wheat field. Eying the sky, he probably figured that the weather was right and it was safe enough to take a chance.

As the rubbish burned, the unpredictable wind arose and increased rapidly until it was blowing at 50 miles an hour. The farmer's rubbish fire





spread through his own grazing lands and roared on through the ranges of others.

That fire starting in a rubbish heap was fought by 500 men. Four farmers were killed and scores of them suffered burns and other injuries. Fifty thousand acres of grazing lands burned. Cattle were killed and tons of hay ruined. The price of that rubbish fire was \$300,000.

## **Fires kill wildlife.**

Forest fires take their toll of wildlife. The forest is the home of the deer, the bear, the chipmunk, the squirrel, and many birds. The streams are the haven of trout. When fire strikes in the woods, it may travel so fast it outruns even the deer. Many are trapped and burned alive. Fish are suffocated by stream pollution from silt and debris. Even though these creatures survive, their nests and lairs are destroyed, and the grasses, nuts, and berries on which they lived are gone.

## **Fires destroy beauty.**

Forest fires often leave disfiguring scars on the face of America's beauty. Our recreational areas may be ruined. Untouched by fire, the forests appeal to us all. The great woods afford us escape and retreat from the routine of our daily lives. YOU, the fisherman, know and love each lonely fishing stream. YOU, the camper, pitch your tent in the solitude of the forest. YOU, the tourist, relax and dream here. YOU, the health seeker, find strength in these woods. YOU, the hiker, pause on the trail to watch the sun set beyond a far woodland. YOU may build a cabin or summer home in these woods and count the days until you can return again.

Then — fire strikes and that beauty may be gone forever. The very spots you loved so well are raw and ghastly eyesores. The cabin you had, and the haunts you knew, are NOTHING now but memories.



# PREVENTION



*you* can prevent forest fires. No matter who you are — school teacher, publisher, radio and television director, advertising executive, banker, businessman, minister, legislator, clubwoman, or civic leader — YOU can help. If you're a camper, tourist, sportsman, picnicker, rancher, farmer, miner, or American youngster — YOU can help. No matter how old or how young, YOU, even though you may rarely go near the forest, can help prevent forest fires.

*you*, the school teacher, can impress upon your students the importance of forest fire prevention. You can work to include a course in forestry and fire prevention in the curriculum. Through early training, care with fire CAN be made a habit. You can sponsor forestry demonstrations in your school. In many localities, you can obtain wardens and rangers as speakers, who will give first-hand facts on fire prevention.

*you*, the publisher, have the power of the press at your command. You use tons of paper made from wood pulp. You understand the need for conservation of the forests from which it came. You can contribute to your own economic welfare and do humanity a service by stressing the need for fire prevention in write-ups and editorials. You can time these articles and editorials to coincide with the seasons of greatest fire danger in your locality. Your words will be read and heeded by thousands who may ultimately visit the forests.

*you*, the radio and television director, can do your part. Perhaps you can interest your local sponsor in weaving a fire prevention message into his commercials. The store for which you are promoting the sale of sporting goods may be induced to devote a few seconds of time to a brief fire prevention warning. You on the national networks can reach millions. Radio and television already have been of much help, but to be truly effective, the message must be hammered home again and again.

*you*, the advertising executive, in consultation with a client who wishes to conduct a campaign to increase the sale of cardboard cartons and



containers, may be able to point out the relation between his product and the source from which it came — the forest. Once he realizes the significance of this, the way is open to the suggestion that he can promote both his own business and benefit the public at large by brief mention of forest fire prevention. The message could be carried on letterheads, in broadsides, booklets, and pamphlets, and it could appear in magazine and newspaper advertisements.

**You**, the businessman, can feature fire prevention messages on wrap-arounds and stickers. You can display posters in factories, stores, and service stations. If your business is railroading, you can feature your message on the backs of dining-car menus. It can appear on timetables, booklet matches, and other promotional material.

**You**, the minister, can appeal to your congregation. Your text may be based on man's love for the forest, the inspiration and joy he derives from the woods, and the tragedy to all of us when they are lost by fire.

**You**, as a legislator in your own State, can promote interest in the formulation and adoption of a State-wide plan for fighting forest fires in their early stage. You can be helpful in securing enactment of strong forest fire laws and the provision of adequate appropriations for fire prevention and control activities.

**You**, the clubwoman, believe in the value of fire prevention. You insist that your children understand the danger of playing with fire. By the same token you can organize and arouse your community to a greater understanding of the forest fire menace. A united and determined group of women has a powerful voice in community affairs. You can invite a warden or ranger to address your group. His fire prevention message can be given community-wide publicity through your local press and radio. Both of these organizations have a keen sense of responsibility when it comes to something worth while that women want.

**You**, the picnicker, tourist, sportsman, camper, rancher, farmer, miner, and American youngster have DIRECT responsibility for the prevention of forest fires. Your business or pleasure leads you immediately into or near the forest. The protection of the woods and wildlife depends to a large extent upon how YOU act. Only YOU can prevent forest fires!

## TO GET MORE INFORMATION

For colorful fire prevention posters, other display material, and more information about forest, woods, and range fires, the damage they do, and how YOU can help prevent them, write to:

(1) State Forester or Commissioner of Conservation of your State; (2) Regional Forester, U. S. Forest Service at Missoula, Mont.; Denver 2, Colo.; Albuquerque, N. Mex.; Ogden, Utah; San Francisco 11, Calif.; Portland 8, Oreg.; Philadelphia 7, Pa.; Atlanta 3, Ga.; or Milwaukee 3, Wis.; (3) Director of Campaign, U. S. Forest Service, Washington 25, D. C.



## TRAGIC FOREST FIRES

**The Maine Fires**—October 1947. This series of disastrous fires raged for 10 days. Sixteen people were killed and nearly 10,000 required first-aid. One hundred seventy-five thousand acres were burned; hospitals, schools, hotels, churches, homes, farms, and businesses were wiped out. The Red Cross alone spent \$2,357,000 for relief and rehabilitation. The damage to timber and personal property ran into millions. All because of human carelessness.

**Texas Fires**—October 1947. During the latter part of September and early October of 1947, 900 man-caused fires burned 55,000 acres of timberland in eastern Texas causing an estimated damage of over \$1,000,000 to timber and improvements. Luckily no human lives were lost. Fires of this nature can be stopped if YOU and others demand that our fire laws be enforced.

**Tillamook Fire**—Oregon, 1933. This holocaust ravaged 267,000 acres and destroyed 12 billion board feet of timber. The loss to labor, industry, and the public was estimated at \$350,000,000. Sparks created by the friction of a steel cable sliding around a tree trunk started the fire. One bucket of water thrown on this fire IMMEDIATELY could have put it out.

**Matilja Canyon Fire**—California, 1932. This fire occurred in the Santa Barbara National Forest, and destroyed an area of 256 square miles. Watersheds were ruined and the water supply for eight towns and thousands of irrigated farms was seriously interrupted. Two thousand five hundred men from 17 fire camps fought this conflagration. Fortunately, no human lives were reported lost, but the charred carcasses of many deer and other wildlife were found after the flames had been extinguished. The result of another man-caused fire!

**Cloquet Fire**—Minnesota, 1918. The Cloquet fire started one October afternoon when the woods were tinder-dry from lack of rain. Cloquet, a thriving sawmill town of 12,000 people, was gutted and left in ashes. Thirty million dollars worth of timber lands and property went up in smoke and for a time the fire was a grave threat to the city of Duluth. Four hundred people perished in this fire and others resulting from it in the same region.

**Peshtigo Fire**—Wisconsin, 1871. For sheer loss of human life, the Peshtigo fire rates as one of the worst our country has ever known. Fifteen hundred people were killed — five times as many as in the great Chicago fire which began on the same day. Over 1,280,000 acres of pine were burned out, and entire towns and communities destroyed. Again — CARELESSNESS!





"I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully to defend from waste the natural resources of my country—its soil and minerals, its forests, waters, and wildlife."

# "SMOKEY SAYS"



## "Follow These Rules"

- 1 CRUSH OUT YOUR SMOKES!** When out-of-doors, stop to smoke in safe places only. With the side of your shoe, clear a space in the surface litter down to the mineral soil. Drop your cigar, cigarette butt, or pipe ash on this cleared spot. With the heel of your shoe, grid it into the ground until you're sure it's out. When driving, use your ash tray. NEVER throw burning material from any vehicle.
- 2 BREAK YOUR MATCH IN TWO!** This safety test will insure that the flame is extinguished. Always feel the burnt end before throwing your match away. Always make sure your match is DEAD OUT—a good habit, for home or woods.
- 3 DROWN YOUR CAMPFIRE!** Before you build a campfire, scrape away all inflammable material from a spot 6 feet in diameter. Dig a hole in the middle and build your fire there. Keep it small. NEVER build a campfire against trees, logs, or near brush. Before leaving your campfire, stir the coals while soaking them with water. Turn the sticks over and soak both sides, as well as the earth around the fire. Make sure the last spark is DEAD OUT by feeling the embers with your bare hand.
- 4 USE CARE IN BURNING!** First of all, find out if your State laws require a permit for burning brush or debris. If so, get one from your local fire warden or ranger. Have plenty of help, tools, and water handy. NEVER burn slash, grass, leaves, or brush in unusually dry, hot, or windy weather.

**Remember—**

**Only YOU can prevent forest fires**